United Nations

Press Release

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council confirms $1.6 billion ceiling for Iraqi oil sales; authorizes release of funds from escrow account for humanitarian needs.

- Secretary-General receives "encouraging reactions" to ideas he put forward during meetings with President of El Salvador and General Command of Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

- Secretary-General appoints Margaret Anstee to coordinate United Nations efforts to counter impact of burning oilfields in Kuwait.

- New round of talks between Guatemalan factions opens in Mexico City.

- Anti-Apartheid Committee welcomes signing of South African peace accord on violence and urges full compliance.

- International Labour Organisation and Danish agency sign $26 million technical cooperation agreement.

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The Security Council, confirming its ceiling of $1.6 billion in limited Iraqi oil sales, this morning authorized the immediate release by the Secretary-General of one-third of that amount from the escrow account established for Iraq's essential civilian needs.

The Council urged that any provision to Iraq of foodstuffs, medicines, materials and supplies to meet those needs should be undertaken through arrangements which assured their equitable distribution.

By adopting resolution 712 (1991) by a vote of 13 in favour to 1 against (Cuba), with 1 abstention (Yemen), the Council approved recommendations contained in a report of the Secretary-General, which outlined a basic structure and measures for the sale of Iraqi oil for humanitarian requirements. The Council also decided that the oil should be immune from legal proceedings and that all States should take steps to ensure that protection.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Prior to Council action on the resolution, the representative of Iraq, Abdul Amir A. Al-Anbari, said that it contained the same shortcomings and contradictions which existed in resolution 706. The text, while expressing concern for the humanitarian needs of Iraq, perpetrated the economic siege against Iraq and reinforced the embargo situation. He asserted that some States practised political hypocrisy in that they defended human rights while at the same time they played with the lives of the Iraqi people.

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A United Nations spokesman announced today that Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar had received encouraging reactions to the ideas he advanced to the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) during their meetings on Thursday, 17 September. The spokesman said the ideas were contained in a working paper and concerned guarantees for the reintegration into society of the FMLN.

The Secretary-General began his meetings with the two parties at Headquarters on Monday. He invited them to New York for talks in order to break the deadlock in the negotiations between the two sides.

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A new round of talks opened this morning in Mexico City between representatives of the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG).

A United Nations official told correspondents that the talks would centre on the question of human rights -- the second part of the first item of the general agenda agreed to in Mexico City on 26 April. The talks, scheduled to last three days, were being held in the presence of the Conciliator, Monsignor Rodolfc Quezada Toruño, and of the Representative of the Secretary-General, Francesco Vendrell, acting as Observer.

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The Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Margaret Anstee, has been appointed by the Secretary-General as his Personal Representative to coordinate United Nations efforts to counter the impact of the burning oil wells in Kuwait and in the region.

The appointment is in response to a request from the Government of Kuwait, which is concerned about the serious impact on air, water, soil, the coastal and marine environment, fauna and vegetal cover in Kuwait and in the region, and its corollary effects on health and the quality of life.

Ms. Anstee is expected to travel to Kuwait on 7 October on a preliminary visit to prepare the ground for a comprehensive assessment mission.

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She will work closely with United Nations agencies involved in offsetting the effects of the disaster, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

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The Special Committee against Apartheid has welcomed the National Peace Accord recently concluded in South Africa, saying it considered it a significant step in the search for a negotiated end to apartheid.

In a press communiqué issued at Headquarters today, the Committee commended the signatories for their determination to end political violence in South Africa. By their agreement last week, it said, the signatories had opened the prospects for a climate that fostered a culture of tolerance conducive to a peaceful process.

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An agreement signed today in Geneva with the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) will give the International Labour Office (ILO) access to $26 million in technical cooperation funds, to be spent over four years.

The programme of ILO field activities in developing countries to be funded by Danish sources includes 38 projects, ranging from workers' education and employers' activities to small-enterprise development, and from promotion of rural incomes to improvement of factory inspectorates.

Denmark was the second biggest contributor to country-funded ILO technical cooperation programmes in 1990.

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